

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-16, and 20-21 are pending in the present application. Claims 2-3 and 17-19 were canceled in this response. New claims 20 and 21 were added in this response. No new matter was introduced as a result of the amendment. Entry of the amendments and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been allowed. Accordingly, new claims 20 and 21 have been introduced in this response to incorporate the subject matter of claim 1 in alternative form. Similarly, claims 4-16 depend directly and/or indirectly from claim 1. While the Office Action initially rejected these claims, it is presumed that the rejection was based on an erroneous presumption that they depended upon independent claim 2.

Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant has canceled claim 19, and introduced new claim 21, which contains the suggested language proposed by the examiner. Withdrawal of the rejection is earnestly requested.

Claims 2-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shankar* (US Patent 6,768,733). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly requested.


Applicant has canceled claims 2-3 and 17-19, which renders moot the aforementioned rejection. Regarding claims 4-16, Applicant notes that these claims depend directly and/or indirectly to claim 1, which has been allowed. Withdrawal of the rejection is earnestly requested.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 4-16, and 20-21 are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Applicants earnestly request an early Notice of Allowance. If any fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (0112740-273) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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